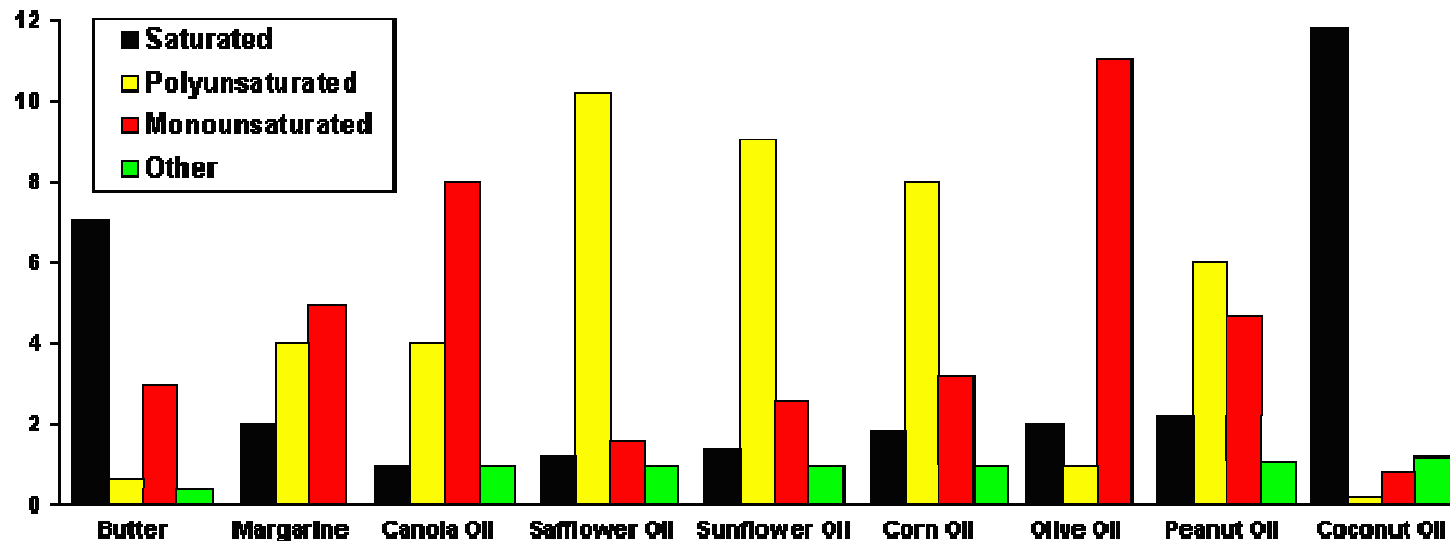


Breakdown of Fat Types in Various Oils



Definitions:

- Saturated Fats - the 'bad' fats which are known to raise blood cholesterol levels
- Monounsaturated Fats - the 'good' fat which can lower blood cholesterol level
- Polyunsaturated Fats - 'in between fat' which has some good and bad properties
- Trans Fatty Acid - a man-made fat which is worse for you than saturated fats. These are made when certain oils are heated (see below) and are also present in foods which contain hydrogenated oils such as margarine. If you use margarine buy one that is non-hydrogenated. Read food labels and avoid all products which contain hydrogenated oils.

The following points regarding the above graph should be noted:

- Notice that Olive oil has the largest proportion of monounsaturated fats. These are the "good" fats that are desirable in your diet.
- Also of note is the extremely large proportion of saturated fat (the "bad" fat) in coconut oil. This is common of other tropical oils such as palm oil. Palm oil is the oil that got a lot of attention when it was discovered that movie popcorn was being popped in this evil oil.
- While Canola oil appears to be the best oil of the bunch due to its low amount of saturated fat and relatively high levels of poly and monounsaturated fats, the benefit of the high levels of monounsaturated fat in Olive oil outweigh the benefits of lower levels of saturated fat in the Canola oil. Another important factor which should be considered is the fact that Olive oil (as well as Peanut oil) does not breakdown into trans-fatty acids at high heat and can therefore be used in cooking. You should avoid cooking with oils other than Olive or Peanut oil.
- Butter and margarine are also outlined above. Different types of margarine will have different proportions of the above fats. If you cook with margarine (ie-fry foods) the heat will create trans-fatty acids in the margarine (even in non-hydrogenated margarines) so in this instance you would be better to use butter which does not breakdown in the heat. Better still is to switch to Olive oil because then you don't have to worry about trans-fatty acids or saturated fats. Margarines which are made with Olive oil make a good choice but your best bet is to avoid them all together because there is not a lot of benefit that comes from eating margarine or butter.

To summarize, use more olive oil, avoid tropical oils, eliminate hydrogenated oils and trans fatty acids from your diet. These are simple steps towards good health.

Source: <http://www.spinalhealth.net/fats.html>